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## Reviews and Notes

### THE "READINGS IN INDIANA HISTORY"—SOME CRITICISMS

THIS MAGAZINE and the "Extension Department" of the University have received a number of highly appreciative expressions concerning the *Readings in Indiana History* issued by the University last fall under the editorship of a Committee of the History Section of the State Teachers' Association. A number of schools have ordered copies of this book and there is evidence that it has done a good deal to promote interest in and knowledge of Indiana in our school life. We are pleased to be able to print this good letter from Judge Daniel Waite Howe, President of the Indiana Historical Society, written to Professor Woodburn:

Indianapolis, November 1, 1914.

My Dear Friend:

I received on last Saturday the volume of *Readings in Indiana History* for which I wish to thank you and the Publication Committee. I have already read a large part of the volume with great interest. It is at once apparent that an immense amount of time and labor has been expended in getting this collection together. Its value is equally apparent. It will stimulate in the schools, a new interest in the study of Indiana History, make our children and our children's children realize the fact that Indiana has a history, a history to be proud of, and impress them with a desire to know more about it.

It will furnish the future historians of Indiana with valuable material. Most persons, even those familiar with the method of making historical investigations, would be at a loss to know where to look for much of the information here collected in compact and convenient form, and the difficulty of searching for it would be largely increased by the fact that so many of the authorities are practically inaccessible to those who do not know just where to find them.

I hope that the present volume is only the precursor of others of a similar kind and that the next Indiana Legislature will make a suitable appropriation to aid the committee in its useful labors in behalf of the State.

Please express my warmest thanks to the members of the committee and especially to Mr. Esarey, assuring them that I, for one, at least, appreciate the value of their labors.

I am as ever sincerely your friend,

DANIEL WAIT HOWE.

The following letter also concerning the *Readings in Indiana History* has been received. The criticism is just and the defect pointed out can not be remedied until the historical materials of the State are in a more available condition:

Indianapolis, January 19, 1915.

Dear Sir:

I am enjoying the *Readings in Indiana History*, which I believe was prepared by you. I congratulate you on the good work you are doing. May I make one suggestion? The early period from the settlement of Cincinnati to the financial distress and the opening of the "New Purchase" was largely influenced by and from the Whitewater Country. That region from Lawrenceburg to the National Road played a part in every important thing. Brookville was the head of immigration, it was the centre of activity in business, politics, etc., and was the point of diffusion to the new territory as rapidly as it opened up. The recollections of Wm. McClure, Rev. T. A. Goodwin, Rev. Dr. L. D. Potter, and others published in the early Brookville papers and statements made by the original settlers and doubtless preserved by their descendants should be available. Also similar material from Lawrenceburg and other points.

It has seemed to me that this publication and some others do not get the right setting and do not have exactly the right point because of the omission of the many important relationships sustained by the Whitewater region to the settlement and development of the State.

Perhaps I would magnify that region too much and its part. I grew up there. My people came to it in 1803. I know its story. What do you think?

Yours, etc.,

(Signed) AMOS W. BUTLER.

The following criticism by Hon. John W. Foster carries weight since his own memory reaches back distinctly to the period in question:

Washington, D. C.

The children of today in our public school, in reading the editorial introduction to "The Slavery Contest in Indiana," will form the opinion that the majority of the people of Indiana in the fifties were opposed to the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 and resisted the efforts of the slave owners to recover their runaway slaves.

I think this is an erroneous statement of the facts as they existed in Indiana at that period. The Democratic Party was in the ascendant in the State, its members of Congress, both Senators and Representatives, were committed to the strict enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law and the adherents of that party generally favored the recognition of the constitutional right of the slaveholders to their property in their slaves. The members of the Whig Party, then the minority party in Indiana, supported Henry Clay's compromise measures, including the Fugitive Slave Law. Only

a small band of people, known as Abolitionists, openly opposed this law and gave aid and secret protection to runaway slaves. The change which appeared in public sentiment after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, was based upon opposition to the extension of slavery north of 36° 30', and had no relation to the Fugitive Slave Law, although the latter doubtless was repugnant to very many of the inhabitants.

Yours very truly,

JOHN W. FOSTER.

*In My Youth.* From the Posthumous Papers of Robert Dudley.  
Published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis,  
pp. 493. 1914.

The above puzzle was placed before the reading public a few weeks ago. It is the title to one of the most attractive books on Hoosier life and history which has appeared since the *Hoosier Schoolmaster* was published. As the title implies, the author, presumably an old person, tells his imaginary grandchildren of the times and conditions under which he grew up. The author pretends to be, or to have been a Quaker. The author's home, though not definitely given, seems to have been about Plainfield. The time is about the middle of the century. The author was quite a lad when the railroad was finished to Indianapolis. Before that time his father frequently drove to Lawrenceburg to do the annual trading. The father was a man of some prominence, being well acquainted with Governor Joseph A. Wright, then in office. The story would seem to cover the period from about 1835 to 1852.

For his subject matter the author takes the whole round of pioneer life. The hard work, the exposure, the mean house, the poor roads, the hidebound routine, and the homely fare are matched with the voracious appetites, the careless plodding, the country scenery, the sparkling fire, the warm though ill-fitting clothes, and the rugged manly strength. The daily, weekly, or yearly grind of duties loses its harshness when seen through the mists of memory. The superstitions and formalities of the times and of the church and schools are sympathetically pointed out in a style mellowed by the wide vision and broad tolerance of a green old age. The social life of the community, the house raising, the log-rolling, the quilting the Sunday-after-meeting-dinners, the circus, all these give an insight into the life and character of the times. Woven into these details of home life is an intensely amusing, matter-of-fact love